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placed on the roll had been fifty-three years in the service of the company and thus continues to receive more than one-half of his regular pay.

GEORGE G. TUNELL.

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### STATE UNIVERSITIES AND LABOR BUREAUS.

THERE are in the various commonwealths of the United States thirty-six labor bureaus established under the authority of the law. These bureaus are departments of state governments established for the purpose of inspecting factories and enforcing the labor laws. Usually another duty, largely incidental, has accompanied the organization of the labor bureaus, and that has been the collection of statistics in regard to wages, the number of factories, their capitalization, and product. The offices thus created by the law in the labor bureaus owe their existence to the pressure brought upon the various legislatures to grant direct representation to the laboring element in the commonwealth government. In consequence the appointment of officers to fill these positions has nearly always been made from the labor organizations, while any attempt to select men outside of the trade unions has been met with opposition and fierce denunciation.

As indicated above there are two classes of duties for the work of the labor bureau. The first may be regarded as a police function which is seen in the inspection of factories, the enforcement of law in reference to fire escapes, sanitary conditions, and the payment of wages. The second duty is found in the collection of statistical matter, largely for the purpose of indicating whether wages are rising or falling, and what is the condition of the laboring classes. Rarely has this work been done well. Occasionally a man is found in the office of labor commissioner who has gathered data and has analyzed it in a scientific way, but more often the man who has been appointed is not a skilled statistician, in fact, may not even be an educated man. It would seem wise, therefore, that the two functions, police duties and the collection of statistical matter, should be separated. There are in our commonwealth governments too many departments engaged in the enforcement of rules and regulations. An instance of this statement may be seen in the oil inspectors, boiler inspectors, food inspectors, sanitary inspectors, and labor commissioner, all of them

engaged in the enforcement of law. If these various police functions were grouped together in one department, it would be possible to reduce the expenses and to give better services to the community. The question then arises what would become of the statistical part of the labor commissioners' work.

This should go where it naturally belongs, to the departments of the state universities that are dealing with matters of statistics. Most of the state universities now have trained men engaged in the teaching of economics and political science. These men understand the use of statistics, and could, if authorized by the state, collect data, analyze and give results and conclusions that would possess some value. Some expenses would be incurred in giving over this function to the state universities, but it would not be any greater than now rests upon the state in the method pursued at present. Graduate students could be used to aid in the collection and in the analysis of the data gathered. It would be necessary, however, to have the co-operation of the police department of the state to collect some of the data relating to factories and laborers, which would then be handed over to the statistical department for tabulation.

Nothing has been done in this direction in our various commonwealths, but certainly there is much that the state universities can do in the work of the government which might well be delegated to them and which would result undoubtedly in better service to the community, and among these is the collection of statistics and their analysis. It is true that such a division of state functions and the centralization of police power in one department would be vigorously opposed on the part of politicians, but nevertheless this must be done sooner or later, and it certainly is worth the consideration of students and the authorities in the state universities.

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#### NEW YORK LABOR STATISTICS.

THE latest report of the New York Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>1</sup> offers a notable instance of the statistical methods and results that are to be looked for at the hands of our state bureaus.

<sup>1</sup> *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the State of New York, 1899.*